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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY AUGUST 21-23, 2004

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for August 21-23, 2004. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

EVRENSEL, ULKEDE OZGUR GUNDEM: A sound bomb placed in Yagmur Restaurant in Tunceli on August 20 exploded, causing material damages in the building and wounding one client. Tunceli Governor Mustafa Erkal visited the explosion site. In Tunceli, it is claimed that more than fifteen restaurants where alcoholic beverages are served have been employing foreign women and engaging in prostitution. Separately, Musa Ayhan and Dervis Ismail, a Syrian national, were identified as the two PKK-Kongra Gel militants who attempted to place a bomb at a police check point near Van airport. When the bomb they attempted to place exploded, Ayhan was killed and Ismail was wounded.

EVRENSEL, ULKEDE OZGUR GUNDEM: In Silopi, Sirnak province, a group of 800 DEHAP supporters marching from DEHAP's office to the Sub-governor's office to deliver petitions advocating a solution to the Kurdish issue were confronted by police. The demonstrators staged a sit-in to protest the attitude of the police.

ULKEDE OZGUR GUNDEM: Approximately 300 people gathered in DEHAP's Provincial Office in Hakkari to deliver petitions advocating "freedom for Ocalan." GOT forces took stringent security measures when the crowd marched to the Governor's Office. The demonstrators shouted pro-Ocalan slogans. Police did not intervene in the incident.

ULKEDE OZGUR GUNDEM: In Mardin province, Huseyin Seyhan, Sukru Dilek, and Ali Akyuz were detained by Dargecik police on August 17 after visiting the hot springs near Dargecik township and giving a ride to a person unknown to them on their way home. The men's detention was based on a denouncement made by that person, whom they had dropped in Dargecik. The three men are still being questioned. Police also raided Dilek's house and impounded his car.

TURKIYE: In Yuksekova, Hakkari province, citizens found a decapitated body in an empty field near a school. Police at the scene identified the dead body as Sihat Aykut (16), the son of a village guard. The Jandarma is also conducting an investigation.

HURRIYET: The inspectors from the Interior Ministry investigating the "Drug Case in Van," in which former lawmaker Mustafa Bayram's son was kidnapped from a Police Station by armed gang members, concluded their investigation. The inspectors found Van Security Director Tacettin Kurt and Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crimes Director Tayfun Albayrak guilty for not fulfilling their "judiciary responsibilities."

ZAMAN, MILLIYET: The Diyarbakir Kurdish Language School will be officially opened today. Kurdish-speaking, retired Turkish literature teachers will be allowed to teach Kurdish to students. The National Education Directorate granted permission for opening the school on July 15. Enrollments started on August 15, but the academic year will start on September 1. President Sezer, Prime Minister Erdogan and some other high-ranking officials were invited to the opening ceremonies of the Kurdish Language School. The school, which currently has 750 students and 3 teachers, will employ 9 more teachers

SABAH GUNEY, YENI SAFAK, EKSPRES, TURKIYE, BOLGE, CUMHURIYET: In Adana, police from the Anti-smuggling and Organized Crimes Department of the Adana Security Directorate arrested 17 members of the Aybeyler Gang, who were making plans for attacking the Cakarlar Gang. Police seized 6 unlicensed pistols, 3 cutting tools and 3 false identification cards. The gang members, who are accused of attempted murder and robbery in neighboring towns, were sent to the Adana State Security Court.

TURKIYE: Working on a tip, the Jandarma seized 149 roots of hemp in the garden of a house in Zeytinbelli village of Yumurtalik, Adana province. The Jandarma detained the owner of the house, Mustafa Killi.

TERCUMAN, EVRENSEL, ULKEDE OZGUR GUNDEM: GOT forces launched a massive operation in Siirt and Sirnak provinces against the PKK-Kongra Gel militants who have increased their attacks in southeastern Turkey. 5000 soldiers and village guards deployed in Cizre, Idil, and Guclukonak townships of Sirnak participated

in yesterday's operation. The GOT forces have been undertaking a cleansing operation in the Gabbar and Cudi Mountains. Two PKK-Kongra Gel militants were killed during yesterday's operation in Fındık village of Sırnak. Separately, Murat Kaygisiz, a PKK-Kongra Gel militant who was arrested while he was planning to attack touristic sites in İzmir, claimed that PKK-Kongra Gel had 12 tons of explosives in the Kandil Mountains in Northern Iraq. One kilo of C-4 explosive was found in Kaygisiz' house. Tags showing that the explosives were US-made were found on the C-4 which Kaygisiz had divided into eight equal pieces.

HURRIYET, MILLİYET, CUMHURIYET, MILLİ GAZETE, TURKİYE, EVRENSEL, ZAMAN: As a result of the explosion of a mine on the road near Balveren, Sırnak province, one guard was killed. One PKK-Kongra Gel militant planning to undertake attacks in larger towns was arrested in Dargeçit, Mardin province.

EVRENSEL, TERÇUMAN: In Semdinli, Hakkari province, Heza Parastına Gel (HPG-People Protection Force) militants opened fire at a police station near Semdinli High School, seriously wounding two policemen. The policemen, Recep İsci and Fikret Eric, were taken to the Hakkari Military Hospital by helicopter.

EVRENSEL: HPG guerillas launched two rockets at the Jandarma Command in Derik, Mardin province. No casualties have been reported. GOT forces launched an operation in rural Derik.

EVRENSEL: The Batman police detained five persons in a car at a check-point at the entrance of the town. Police also raided the houses of the detainees while they were being taken to the Anti-Terror Department for questioning.

BOLGE, TERÇUMAN: Based on information provided by the Adana State Security Court prosecutor Nuri Yigit, the Tarsus Chief Public Prosecutor pressed charges against Semih Ureten, another Adana State Security Court prosecutor, for abusing his authority. Ureten is accused of having taken bribes and living a luxurious life that did not match his salary. The indictment asked up to 18 years of imprisonment for Ureten.

SABAH: In Yukarı Tulgali village of Ozalp, Van province, one non-commissioned officer and two sergeants colluding to smuggle oil on horseback and giving instructions to smugglers by cellular telephone were arrested. Four smugglers involved in the incident were imprisoned by court.

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